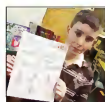




Vandals hammer car

Victims sus-
pect political
motivation

3



Comic Book for Haiti

Student gets
creative for
cause

9



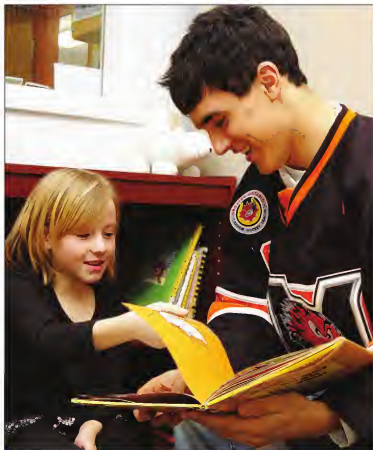
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Saturday, January 30, 2010

Off-ice reading lessons



General Vanier Public School student Vicky Taylor reading a story with Fort Erie Meteor Steven Mueller on Tuesday. The Jr. B team was invited to the school to celebrate World Literacy Day.

Public speaks about condo proposal

➤ 26 people speak
against Crystal
Beach project,
13 speak in favour

Kris Dubé
The Times

Monday's council-in-committee meeting is proof the Crystal Beach Gateway Project is an issue the local community is paying close attention to. In a public meeting under the planning act, 13 people spoke in favour of the development project and 26 voiced their opposition. One speaker even admitted she arrived at town hall under the impression that the idea of building a 12-storey condominium building on the south side of Erie Road was not suitable to the area, but after hearing comments from those in support of the project, she officially declared herself to be sitting on the fence.

After hearing comments from the public in the record-setting meeting last

lasted seven and a half hours, council voted in favour of a report for informational purposes to amend a zoning by-law that would permit the development of a 12-storey, 87 unit residential building with commercial space and public facilities on the ground floor. The Town of Fort Erie purchased the subject lands in 2001 from the Rebstock family for \$2.05 million. From the time of the transaction, it was always the local government's intention to sell the non-beach lands when the right opportunity presented itself, so taxpayers would see a return in their initial investment and to invest in the stimulation of growth in the Crystal Beach area.

Ric Gorham sat on that council and spoke at Monday's public meeting, saying this public-private partnership with the Burlington-based Molinaro Group provides many opportunities for the area and for the local economy.

See Page 2



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Council to make final decision on project in March

From Page 1

"I am encouraged that we are finally faced with a developed proposal that will ultimately see the town realize its return on investment," said Gonthier, who is also the vice-chair of the Fort Erie Economic Development and Tourism Corporation.

David Kompon, a local commercial real estate developer also spoke in support of the project, said the Molinaro Group should be commended for addressing the concerns of residents by removing one of the 12-storey condominium buildings that was part of the original plan. Strong opposition to the proposal, resulted in the Molinaro Group scaling back its plans to only one high-rise tower.

"It seems they've taken a great deal of time and effort to listen to and accommodate the interested parties," said Kompon.

Winnie Swain, a Crystal Beach resident of

12 years and highly active community member who has sat on numerous committees like communities-in-bloom- and the Crystal Beach beautification committee showed her support of the proposal, saying it is her roles on these committees that has made her feel this is the right direction for the area.

"This plan will create a more positive image for Crystal Beach," said Swain.

Many of those who are opposed to the plan said a 12-storey condominium does not fit into the fabric of the Crystal Beach neighbourhood.

Fred Truckenbott was the first to speak against the proposal. He said he has been following this process since it began and even attended the Town's Charette, an input-generating discussion about what the lands could be used for, held in 2001.

He feels when the land was purchased by the Town and discussions began about what it could be used for, the council of the day was headed in the right direction but this proposal is something that he believes will damage the quaint atmosphere of Crystal Beach.

"Somewhere along the line, you've gone off track," he said to the mayor and council.

Ridgeway resident John Hill said people who are not supportive of the project are being labelled as the type that are against any sort of development to the area. He said this is nowhere near the truth and he and many others would like to see improvements made to Crystal Beach, just not this particular proposal.

"I'm not against any enhancement to the area, however I am opposed to this type of enhancement to the area," said Hill.

Brittney Bonner has lived her whole life in Greater Fort Erie and grew up in Crystal Beach. She is strongly opposed to this proposal, saying "this is the wrong kind of development for Crystal Beach."

She said the Town shouldn't be "so eager" to enter into a private-public partnership with the Burlington-based developer and should keep all the land at the beach in public hands. "It should belong to the people," said Bonner.

One issue that people are concerned with is

the existence of the Fowler's Toad in the area and how it falls under the endangered species act. Because of its presence at the beach, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) needs to determine whether this development will provide a better habitat compared to what is currently there today. Director of planning and development Rino Mostacci said in discussions planning staff has had with the MNR, it is assumed some toads might perish in the construction stage. But if their overall habitat will improve once the condominium is built, then the MNR will not have an issue with the project.

"They assume there will be some negative impact, but the end state has to be superior to what currently exists," said Mostacci.

Town staff will return with another report for council to approve or defeat the idea of building the condo building in early March.

Between the 26 people who spoke in opposition to the proposal, 329 group letters were submitted on behalf of others who were unable to speak at the meeting.

Racetrack transition running along smoothly, says Thibert

Kris Dubé
The Times

Transitioning the Fort Erie Racetrack into a functional non-profit organization is moving along as planned, says Jim Thibert, general manager of the Fort Erie Economic

Development and Tourism Corporation (EDTC).

In a teleconference this week with local reporters, Thibert explained the process of turning the 112-year-old border oval into a viable facility and what still needs to be done to make it work during the upcoming three-year

the Fort Erie Live Racing Consortium. Late this week, the lease agreement and a transitional management agreement with owners Nordic Gaming was expected to be complete, moving one step closer to the 2010 racing season coming out of the gates with 78 race dates, as an application to the Ontario Racing Commission has been submitted.

A quarter horse program will also be part of the plan over the next three years, but dates for the unique style of racing coming to town have not yet been finalized.

The season will start in the middle of May and run until October.

"The calendar is almost complete," he said.

Thibert also expects a new management team to be in place very soon, who will be responsible for promoting the fresh start the track has been given. He said it is detrimental to provide a new, unique product for race fans and horsemen.

"In the long run, if people don't see a significant difference in how we're going to approach it, we could very well have a year like we did last year," said Thibert referring to the millions of dollars the track has lost over recent years.

Erie Personnel has also been acquired to assess human resource levels and many experts of the industry have been coming forward with ideas and suggestions, Thibert said.

"There's a lot going on here and we've got a lot of people trying to help us."

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\$10 fee includes instructional materials

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Wed., Feb. 24, 7 pm at Crystal Ridge

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Thurs., Feb. 25, at Central

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Students raise money for Haiti



Over the span of a week, Bertie Public School students like Darrick Ellis, left, Mallory Whyte, Megan Winger, Leah Detenbeck, Caitlyn Page, Ashley Smith and Elaine Cook have been cleaning out their piggy banks to raise money for Haiti relief. So far, the school has brought in over \$2,000 which will then be matched by the Canadian government.

Vandalism may be linked to development

Kris Dubé
The Times

A Ridgeway couple strongly believes an act of vandalism is closely connected to them supporting the Crystal Beach Gateway Project.

At Monday's council-in-committee meeting, Mia Russell was one of 13 people who spoke in favour of a proposal to build a 12-storey condominium building on the south side of Erie Road at Bay Beach.

On Tuesday morning, her husband Nick noticed something different with Mia's 2008 Pontiac Solstice GXP, appearing as if someone had taken a hammer and made several dents on the sports car's hood and driver side door.

The couple feels this was not just a random act of mischief

and the fact that Mia spoke in favour of the project at the meeting that adjourned at 1:30 a.m. on Tuesday, likely motivated whoever is responsible.

Mia owns a business in Ridgeway and has been visited there by people who oppose the project, asking for her thoughts. She said some are very polite and quietly leave when she explains her difference in opinion. But she also claims there have been times when people became aggressive with their language, making the situation simply uncomfortable.

"I feel it's too much of a coincidence," she said.

Niagara Regional Police (NRP) district No. 5 staff sergeant Dave Hunter said connecting the act of mischief and the heavily debated issue at town hall is speculative at this

point. He understands it is an issue that people on both sides are very passionate about but there is no proof someone damaged the Russells' vehicle because of Mia's presentation at the meeting.

"Without any evidence to the contrary, we can't say that," said Hunter.

Nick Russell said he and Mia have supported the project since it was introduced and the local government should be commended for its work on the project. He realizes the public meeting was mandatory under the planning act, but finds it shameful that this is how far people will go over an issue, if their assumption is proven to be true.

"You can't have a lot of success when this is what happens when you get involved."

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Have you HEARD?

by Alana Miller, M.D.
Reviewed by M.D.
Audiotape

WHAT DO YOU HEAR?

If you think that hearing loss is only a symptom of old age, you should know that many of the millions of people currently suffering from hearing loss are anything but old. Due to generally noisier environments and exposure that has lost music directly into listeners' ears, hearing loss is about two-and-a-half times more common among young people than it was just 25 years ago. Thus, younger individuals should forget the stereotypes surrounding hearing loss and old age and ask themselves if they experience difficulty hearing. If you experience problems hearing people speak, noise the TV volume turned up inordinately loud, or have trouble hearing in noisy environments, you have reasons to believe that you are losing your hearing.

Regardless of a person's age, discovering and acknowledging there is a hearing problem is the first step toward correcting it. The next step is turning to an audiologist for comprehensive examination, evaluation, and determination of the best approach to the impairment. Are you thinking there might be a problem with your hearing? Would you like to learn more about today's advanced technology in hearing instruments? We can help you address these issues and others at **HearQuest BALANCE & HEARING CLINIC**, 800 Garrison Road, Fort Erie. We can be reached at 905-871-6242. Most major insurance is accepted. P.S. When it comes to hearing loss, prevention is best. Limit your exposure to loud noise.

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Ask the Expert

Got a question? Ask a Professional!

Ask a Dentist

Q: What can I expect at a first dental visit?

A: Every dentist has adult patients with dental phobias often related to traumatic childhood experiences. That goes bad experience on now with you for life. Unfortunately, as parents it is often too easy to unconsciously pass that anxiety on to our children. The first visit to the dentist, usually at about the age of three, may very well determine how anxious responses to future dental experiences.

The dental visit as well as parents should make that visit a positive experience. Try not to use words like hurt, pain, needle etc., when discussing the visit. Instead, use words like the dentist is going to check your teeth, and you will get a good check-up. The dentist will also give you a good check-up and just show them some of the instruments that New x's, wires and whistles.

The second visit, even if there is some decay, is again to correct the teeth, brush the teeth and give fluoride. The child must always go to the filling as long as we keep the appointment short and simple, even if we have to repeat or we have to repeat or we have to repeat.

The child can be given a mild sedative an hour before the procedure, sometimes nitrous oxide and oxygen can be used, however, if the child is in a dangerous and there is a risk of harm due to unconsciousness, a referral to a pediatric dentist is recommended.

Terry McKay
McKay Dentistry Professional Corporation
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179 Ridge Road, Ridgeway
Phone: 905-894-5555



Terry McKay
BSc., M. Sc. D.M.D.



Ask a Hair Stylist

Q: Do many men get their hair professionally coloured?

A: Only the men that want to look as young as they feel. Hair coloring is so advanced now that it doesn't have to look unnatural. A few highlights to blend in grey or a full color that fades on tone and lasts up to 4-6 weeks. A quick all over color application processes quickly in 10 minutes to accommodate male guests need for speed.



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Ask a Business Counselor

Q: Where do business ideas come from?

A: Business ideas can come from many different sources such as training and work experiences, deciding to turn a hobby into a full-time venture, or deciding to become a distributor for a product line. Business ideas are also inspired through customer experience such as products not being available locally or less than adequate. Other options are purchasing an existing business or established franchise.

For more information contact:



Helen McCreadie



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Ask a Cable Technician

Q: What conditions affect wireless signal in a house? Why might I have a high signal in my living room and a low signal in my bedroom?

A: Wireless technology has come a long way in recent years but unfortunately they are all subject to the laws of radio waves. Radio waves are affected by all sorts of interference. They bounce off walls, metal as they travel, and can be cancelled out entirely by other electronics. Because of these factors a person may have decent signal in one spot and almost no signal in another; a few paces away (shown as a dead spot). It is always best practice to get the transmitter (wireless router) in the center of your house. For example, a two-story house with a basement should have the wireless router on the first floor and in a central room. It is difficult for a wireless router on the second floor to send a solid signal to the basement because of all the building materials between the wireless router and computer. Usually repositioning the wireless router or its antenna will help achieve better signal and sometimes more technology is needed to increase the range or signal strength.



Matthew Warchuk

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Ask a Funeral Director

Q: How will the HST affect Funeral costs?

A: It is anticipated that the HST will apply to Funeral costs when implemented on July 1st. Prepaid Funeral agreements, entered into prior to the July 1st deadline will not be affected. I would invite you to call me to discuss how you can avoid paying HST, and the options and benefits of Prepaid Funerals.



Darren Flagg
Funeral Director



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Ask the Expert

Ask a Real Estate Expert

Q: What are some renovations that add value to my home?

A: A good investment is a renovation. It should increase the value of your home by at least the amount you spent, or close to it.

Low cost improvements that make a home look better: painting, new wallpaper, and items like new rugs and curtains help brighten and improve the look of a home, and maybe add a little value to your house if they are done close to time of sale.

More costly ones are improved kitchens and bathrooms but they should increase the value of your home, but keep in mind that they have value over time. When in doubt call a Real Estate Expert!



Mary Ott
Broker



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Got a question? Ask a Professional!

Ask a Restaurateur

Q: Is competition good or bad for the Restaurant Business?

A: This question has been brought up lately by some concerned businesses in Crystal Beach. Competition is absolutely with no question great for any new and/or existing business. New businesses bring a new element of consumerism. A Roadside sit down restaurant/pizzeria, will attract more new visitors than the existing restaurants can attract on their own. A beach entrance restaurant is rare in Southern Ontario.

Creating a destination is exactly what restaurants do when they cluster and form a district. Well seasoned business owners tend to locate side by side with their competition allowing more consumers to migrate to that specific district. Jarvis Street are seeing this new business practice. Coffee Culture and The Burren share similar menu items. The Bistro has increased our visibility with the help of our competitor so more people can experience both businesses at different times. If we could further expand the variety of eateries in our district we would be even more of a dining destination.

I would like to see many more restaurants and cafes on Jarvis Street. The more the merrier!
Bon Appetit! Your Host, Peter Koutroulakis.



Peter Koutroulakis
Owner

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Ask an Accountant

Q: How will new CPP rules affect me?

A: Finance recently announced changes to the Canada Pension Plan to be phased in from 2011 to 2016. Here are some highlights:

- Early CPP claims (prior to 65) to be reduced 7.26 per year (prior was 6% per year)
- Delaying CPP claims past 65 to be increased by 8.46 per year (prior was 6% per year)
- Requirement to stop work for 2 months to collect early CPP to be eliminated
- If you work past 65 and are collecting CPP you can make further contributions to increase benefits

Ability to remove 9 low-earning years used to calculate average pay for CPP purposes (previous was 7 years) to help workers whose career was interrupted.

These changes allow you to help plan your retirement based on your unique circumstances.



Kenneth D. Lenchyshyn
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Call now to reserve your spot on the next

Ask The Expert

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Ask an Automotive Service Technician

Q: What is the most important aspect of vehicle maintenance?

A: In addition to changing the oil and oil filter, replacing the engine air filter on a regular basis is one of the single most important acts of maintenance a car owner can do to their vehicle. The function of the engine air filter is just as important to helping prevent engine damage as the oil filter, a fact that most car owners may not be aware of. Engine air filters allow your vehicle to "breathe". Engines need a precise mixture of fuel and air in order to run properly and air enters through the filter. Air filters prevent dirt and other foreign particles to the air from entering the system and potentially damaging the engine.



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Service Manager

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Ask the Chiropractor

Q: My doctor told me I have osteoporosis. Is there anything I can do to fix it?

A: A good calcium supplement is usually the first step. Calcium doesn't work on its own, so be sure to buy one that has added nutrients, like vitamin D, magnesium, phosphorus, and other bone supporting minerals. Also, try to find a calcium supplement that uses a more bio-available form of calcium, such as calcium citrate, or microcrystalline hydroxyapatite (may be hard to find in regular drug stores).

The next step is to start a routine of weight-bearing exercise. Our bodies are programmed to react to stresses placed on our bones by strengthening them to handle the extra load. A general strengthening program, including any weight-bearing exercises such as squats, lunges, and even light jogging can significantly increase bone density. Be sure to speak with your health professional before starting any exercise program.



Darrell Garner
Hons. B.Kin, DC



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Ask an Environmentalist

Q: What is Biological Stream Monitoring?

A: Monitoring is a essential first step in the process of conserving and restoring our watersheds. It can be used to assess the health of local watersheds, to document changes in streams or wetland health or detect stress on the system.

Some government agencies and water resource biologists welcome the assistance of volunteer restorationists. In fact, only 10% of watersheds in the United States are professionally monitored. Data collected by volunteers is used by government agencies to assess long-term trends in water quality. Volunteer restorationists also help local governments by discovering water pollution problems on streams, such as sewer leaks or chemical spills that require immediate action.

Whether or not data is submitted to a government agency or university, water quality monitoring can help communities achieve various restoration goals. Monitoring before a restoration project helps to assess the need for restoration and can reveal pollution problems. Continued monitoring after restoration helps to document the benefits of the restoration. In addition, data that documents the positive effects of restoration on a watershed may help you obtain funds and government support for future restoration efforts.



Dean Bell
Executive with
Friends of F.E. Oxbow



opinion page

The
Fort Erie Times

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our editorial

Local support for Haiti is overwhelming

No matter what newspaper you pick up around the world or what TV station you turn to, everywhere you will hear and read about people coming together to help people suffering in Haiti. In Fort Erie, the response has been magnificent. So many local schools have called the Times over the last few weeks, explaining what they are doing for the cause.

Students are taking money out of their own savings and donating it to different Haiti relief organizations, the Town and the Fort Erie Multicultural Centre is working together to help people living there,

as well as the Haitian community we have in town.

We stopped by several schools this week for photos and because of space in this week's paper, along with the amount of news taking place locally, some of them will have to wait until next week.

There will be an International Relief Day today at the All Nations Mission Centre on Garrison Road, a musicians night at the Crystal Chandelier on Feb. 5th and a pasta night at the Italo-Canadian Club on Mar. 11th and so much more.

Our community should be proud of how considerate we are.

Groundhog Day is ridiculous, but I'll be rooting for no shadow

I don't know about you, but every time I think about Groundhog Day, I think about Bill Murray reliving the same day over and over and over again.

Not the Feb. 2 "holi-day" that supposedly has the groundhog telling us the future.

The whole idea of having a rodent to decide whether or not the weather will be favourable or not seems kind of, well, stupid to me.

That's not to say I'm not rooting for the furry thing to poke its head out of its hole, not see its



Matt Day
Reporter's Notebook

shadow and grace us with nice weather for the rest of the season. I'm just saying that people shouldn't get all worked up over it if he sees his shadow and scampers back down into his hole.

This does not mean

that we will have six more weeks of winter.

If this is how it worked, we should have the Groundhog come out in a shady area, with no people around and let him wander away.

Bam! Happy days are ahead.

By now, I'm sure most of you, like me, are sick of constantly waking up and shivering.

And if we are blessed with nice weather, Phil not seeing his shadow, then I'll be rooting for the folklore to be true.

It is said a groundhog's internal clock is believed to be affected



Do You Remember?

An interesting coincidence happened with last week's beehive hairdo picture. Someone thought it might be Mary Beth McKinley. Then Mary Beth McKinley called the museum to identify the men from the Industrial Plastics picture. We asked if she was the "lady with the hair in this week's photo" and she laughingly said no, but she has appeared in two Do You Remember pictures in the past year. So the beehive lady remains an unknown.

Mary Beth told us that the Industrial Plastics picture shows an "Oil Boom" used to contain and absorb oil spills. These were assembled in the plant at 84 Wintemute St. (where the Salvation Army Thrift Store is now). The picture was probably taken around 1966 when Al Labine started with

the company. The man on the left is Paul Pudwell, shop manager. The owner of the company actually has 2 other plants, one in Buffalo, N.Y. and one in Baton Rouge, La. Mr. Prince Sr. started the US company in 1931 and his son Mr. Prince Jr. started Industrial Plastics in Fort Erie in 1953. Thanks to Glen Cox and Mac Collingridge, former IP employees and to assistant vice-president, Mary Beth for this history.

This week's picture shows a group of people. On the back of the photo it says that Lloyd Shearing is in the top row left. Any ideas as to who this group is or where they are? Please contact the museum at 894-5322 or send us an email at museum@forterie.on.ca

by annual changes in the amount of daylight. Hormonal responses to changes in a sleep-related hormone are thought by some to be the signal for them to wake up.

Groundhog-wash. If you were sleeping for months upon end and were greeted by a crowd of people and a strange black object following you on the ground, you would want to go back to bed too.

Couldn't the forecast be decided by, I don't know, professional meteorologists? Even a magic 8-ball seems more logical.

In fact, the good folks at PETA have done it again and are trying to replace Punxsutawney Phil with a robot stand-in.

Extreme? Yes. Equal results? Probably. I will admit, it does give people something to talk about during these drabby days of winter.

"Hey Matt, did you go back to bed too. Predicted no early spring this year."

What a conversation starter. It doesn't help that the media are all over this

monumental event, hyping it as one of the biggest events of each new year.

This isn't to say the tradition shouldn't continue as it is rich in history.

I'll just stick to my other favourite weather saying for the month of March... In like a lion and out like a lamb.

If you want to leave me feedback, e-mail me at mday@forterietimes.com or call me at 905-871-3100 ext. 208. I'd be more than willing to hear your thoughts on this strange holiday.

opinion page

Mayor writes to minister of health, challenges comments made last week

Dear Madam,

I would like to take the opportunity to respond to your comments in the *Globe and Mail* on Saturday January 23, 2010 in a column written by Karen Howlett entitled "As ER's Close, the Debate on the Human Cost Begins". This article focused on the tragic death of Rellly Anzovino, a young resident of our community and the call for a Coroner's Inquest. We in Fort Erie support an Inquest to truly learn the truth of events that fateful night.

What we do not support however is your assertion in the article that the closing of our emergency department at Douglas Memorial Hospital was undertaken to provide better quality health care for our residents and not to save money. The Hospital Improvement Plan (HIP) approved by your Ministry was in fact a cost cutting document disguised under the cloak of providing better quality health care to our residents. You cannot dispute the fact that your Ministry through the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) forced our local health providers to come up with a plan to eliminate their deficit and continue to provide equitable and efficient health care with an already underfunded budget.

The underfunding of our health care system has in fact created a situation in this province that has given rise to your other comment in the article stating "It's important that the public understands that if you want to take advantage of the best health care, we can't provide that in every community." It begs the question then, "if you are not in the community that has the best health care, what level of health care can your community expect?" A question that I am sure a lot of Ontarians and the

residents of Fort Erie would appreciate being answered by you.

Madam Minister, one of your quotes in the article stated "I am absolutely convinced that the people in Niagara have better quality health care now than they did before." I have been asking for a meeting with your office for sometime now so that you can illustrate to me how that statement bears true for the residents of Fort Erie, because I can assure you the people who believe that are not living in my community. The long lines and wait times in order to be attended to in the Welland, Niagara Falls and St. Catharines hospitals that our residents must now go to for Levels 1, 2 and 3 treatment is beyond outrageous. Waiting 6-7 hours just to see a doctor, no beds, overnight stays in the hallway. The list of complaints is lengthy and certainly includes bed closures. Bed closures in the face of bed shortages, a common explanation for the lengthy wait times, are troubling at best. Did Rellly Anzovino receive the best care closest to home? We will never know the answer unless there is a Coroner's Inquest.

I appreciate that your task of continuously developing and maintaining affordable health care in Ontario is difficult. However, never in my life have I seen people rally together in such large numbers, time and time again, to send a message to Queen's Park.

I would be grateful for the opportunity to meet with you at your earliest opportunity to discuss the future of health care services in Fort Erie and Niagara.

Mayor Doug Martin

The TIMES Asks



Dennis Ventura

"It's important to pay attention to anything that will attract new business."



Ian Bell

"The more you know, the more you can do something about it."



David Howes

"It's important because there is so much happening."



Bob Payne

"It's nice to get a headline. That's why I read the newspaper."

What do you think?

E-mail: editorial@forterietimes.com or call 905-871-3100, ext. 207

Public forum deemed a success

Dear Editor,

The larger the crowd the louder the voice is what we have been saying all along and if this was an indicator of the truth of that statement, it is working.

Last week the Yellow Shirt Brigade held an open Forum where people could step forward and tell their stories about personal experiences with our declining health care. These heartfelt stories, and the atmosphere in the full room, were a story in itself. It told that the people are behind us and are worried about their lives, and the lives of loved ones and neighbours. These stories are only the tip of the iceberg and show that our rights to equal accessible health care have been taken away from us.

A compendium of these stories will be sent to the Minister of Health, the Premier, the opposition, the LHIN and the NHS. They cannot deny this problem and keep saying how wonderful it is and is so much better than it was. That is just not so and it is time that all

political persons, locally, provincially, and federally, face the fact that the people of Canada will stand up for what is right. We have a voice and we have a vote.

Yesterday the Yellow Shirt Brigade made a presentation to the Provincial Government Budget sub-Committee Hearing in Niagara Falls, which clearly showed the misuse of funding slated for our Regional Health system, by the NHS and pointed out the deficits they have created, the hospital closings, the downgrading of ER/ste loss of jobs, and the list goes on.

We will not quit, and we will continue to fight for our rights. They are listening now, as was reported this morning, the Ombudsman Andre Marin stated that they are going to investigate the LHIN because of complaints, and the restructuring plan without consulting enough with the people living in the affected areas.

Joy Russell
Yellow Shirt Brigade



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Ombudsman's report on LHIN expected soon

➤ Ontario Health Coalition supports inquiry into Anzovino's death, LHIN believes objective look at incident

Kris Dubé
The Times

Even though the Niagara Health System (NHS's) Hospital Improvement Plan (HIP) has been implemented for months, there is still a glimmer of hope for those who are against everything it stands for. This week, the Ontario Ombudsman's office said its investigation into the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) is nearly complete and will be coming forward with a report within the next few weeks.

The investigation was launched by

ombudsman Andre Marin and his office in March last year, after a number of complaints were filed over the LHIN's use of public consultation in its decision making process while approving the HIP.

The provincial government watchdog does not have jurisdiction over hospitals, but can investigate the LHIN because it is operated by a provincial agency, the Ministry of Health. When the report is complete, Marin will not be addressing the delivery of service since hospitals in Fort Erie and Port Colborne were converted into urgent care centres... only now the LHIN reached its final decision.

"It's not the ombudsman's job to say which hospitals should close, but he can look at the process and see if it was transparent," said Linda Williamson, director of communications for the ombudsman's office.

Also this week, the Ontario Health Coalition (OHC) joined in petitioning the Chief Coroner of Ontario for an inquiry into the death of local teen Reilly Anzovino.

Earlier this month, Niagara Falls MPP and

Fort Erie's representative in the provincial government Kim Craitor acted first with bringing up an inquest and it was later supported by Anzovino's family, Weiland MPP Peter Kormos and Fort Erie native and Ontario PC leader Tim Hudak.

Natalie Mehra, director of the OHC has opposed the provincial government's hospital restructuring plans since day one. She said Anzovino's death was avoidable and is the result of emergency rooms in Fort Colborne and Fort Erie being closed.

"We wanted to make sure that we were being respectful of the family's needs and desires and we wanted to make sure that an inquest is warranted," said Mehra.

"Now that the family has publicly asked for an inquest and given the questions about whether Ms. Anzovino's tragedy could have been prevented, we have written to the chief coroner in support of an inquest," she added.

Deb Mandy, chief executive officer of the LHIN said full co-operation will be given if an inquest does proceed, since there are many questions being asked about this

tragic incident would have been avoided if the Fort Erie and Port Colborne communities still had fully-serviced hospitals available to them locally.

"We welcome a review to have an objective perspective on what happened that day," said Mandy.

Last week, the Yellow Shirt Brigade held a public forum on the topic of hospital changes, attended by people from all over Niagara.

Dozens of stories were shared at the event, hosted by the local citizens group who has been voicing its concern about the NHS and the LHIN since the HIP was introduced.

Active member Joy Russell, said the forum showed how strong people still feel about the loss of emergency rooms at their local hospitals, considering about 150 people showed up.

The group will then compile all the stories they were given and start sending them out to government agencies and officials, who they hope will listen to what they have continued to say for such a long time.

Over 600 slot machines being removed from Racetrack

Patrons of the Fort Erie Racetrack Slots will have less of a selection in slot machines to choose from by June of this year. Last week, Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG) announced it will be

reducing the number of machines currently at the slots facility from 1,079 to 400. Don Pister, OLG spokesperson said the upcoming change will not result in layoffs but some employees will be offered a vol-

untary buyout, a reduction in hours, or a transfer to another OLG site.

"Staff will be offered some options," said Pister.

He pointed out that OLG is evaluating the efficiency and "gaming mix" of many of its sites across the province and when Fort Erie's site was looked at, removing over 600 slot machines was the best solution.

"In Fort Erie's case, it means moving to fewer machines at this time," he said.

He also said a decline in tourism stimulates to the removal of the slot machines, saying revenues are not what they used to be, before the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative and other border issues had such an impact on how often U.S. residents visit OLG facilities.

"That's a factor in our business and as we understand, in other tourism-related businesses in Ontario... particularly those on or close to the border," said Pister.

Niagara Falls MPP Kim Craitor said he would have liked to have been invited to the slots last Thursday when the announcement was made to staff, so he could explain this was also a part of the solution in maintaining live-racing at the Fort Erie



It's not how it should have been done."

— Kim Craitor



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Traffic By-law No. 2000-89, Section 205 provides that "No person shall park a vehicle or permit a vehicle to remain parked" on any street in Town "between the hours of 2:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. on any day during the months of November, December, January, February and March."

The Town's By-law Enforcement Officers will be exercising vigilant enforcement of By-law No. 2000-89. Your vehicle will be issued a parking ticket and could be towed, at your expense, if found in violation of the by-law.

Enquiries may be directed to the Town's By-law Enforcement Officers by calling (905) 871-1600, Extension 2216 (Geoff Stephenson) or Extension 2215 (Jack Cox).
Carolyn J. Kett, A.M.C.T., Town Clerk, Town of Fort Erie

St. Philomena student creates comic book for Haiti donations

Matt Day
The Times

Super Pickles may be a fictional character, but he's quickly turning into a real-life hero.

The guinea pig with special powers helps save a fictional city inside Jordan Masi's first comic book and is helping to save a country in real life.

So far, the nine-year-old first-time writer has raised more than \$75 by selling his five-page comic book to friends, teachers and family. All that money is going toward the school's contribution to Haiti relief efforts through Development and Peace, the Niagara Catholic District School Board's charity of choice.

Masi said he got the idea from reading his favourite comic book series, Captain Underpants.

"I like drawing and reading comics so I just wanted to do it."

His story is quirky to say the least.

It begins with two scientists who have created a secret power potion to give to a guinea pig. He then flies out the window on them and keeps an eye on the city.

The only problem is the same scientists created evil robot bunnies whose main mission is to destroy everything they encounter. In the end, Super Pickles saves the day.

He said the idea to donate the money to Haiti wasn't a hard decision.

"I always give change I find to

different charity boxes and I know the school is collecting money [for Haiti] so I wanted to help."

He started working on the comic book in December on his own time and said it wasn't a part of any school project.

His mother, Linda, said that's just her son's nature.

"It makes me feel so proud, like the best mother in the world," she said. "That's all you can ask for as a parent, for your kids to grow up caring for people."

Jordan's comic book success is seen around the school with posters advertising Super Pickles and the Attack of the Robot Bunnies and with students who are taking interest in the book.

Black and white additions are sold for 25 cents while his coloured editions are 50 cents.

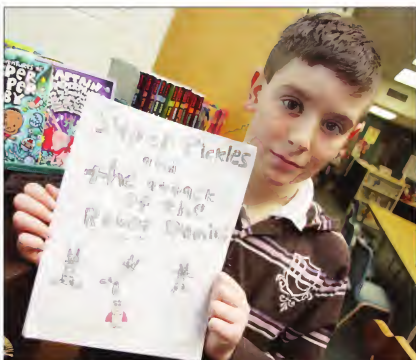
Jordan pointed out it's not about the price, it's about giving what you can.

"It feels good knowing I'm making a difference, even pennies at a time."

St. Philomena has already raised more than \$1,130 through different initiatives such as ice cream, wish days and hot chocolate days. That money will be matched by the Canadian government, bringing their total to more than \$2,000.

In the meantime, Jordan has announced plans for another comic book in the future.

"I keep telling him, 'take it one step at a time'... We didn't think it would ever get this big."



Nine-year-old Jordan Masi holds up a copy of his comic book entitled Super Pickles and the Attack of the Robot Bunnies. The St. Philomena student created the comic book to raise funds for Haiti relief efforts and is on his way to the \$100 mark just by collecting change.

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St. George Catholic School student Bradon Quackenbush eyeing up the basket at the Knights of Columbus free throw event, held at the YMCA last week.

Students step up to foul line

It was nothing but net last Thursday for a few local school children.

The annual Knights of Columbus free throw competition was held, with students who were champions in their school participating in the playoff event.

There were three repeat winners from previous years such as Sunny-Ray Hill and Ashdon Rogers from Crystal Beach Public School and Darrell Harshi from Garrison Road Public School.

Other local champs include Gary Keller, also from Crystal Beach Public

School, Natalie Krnician from St. George, Jenna Clause from Bertie Public, Kaidyn Adair from Crystal Beach and Sidney Merson and Peter Caperchione from Garrison Road Public School.

Jessica Polsey and Jesse Marcel from Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School won the 14-year-old division.

In the battle of the "celebrities" the Blue Knights team, captained by Sandy Annunziata came out on top, with *Times* editor Kris Dubé leading all scorers, making 80 per cent of his shots.

I ♥ Bridge!

For generations, people have enjoyed the fascinating game of Bridge, and now you can too! Beginner bridge course starting Feb. 18 (Thursdays) @ The Lions Douglas Heights Seniors Centre. For more information & rates:

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Bridges welcomes new doctor



Dr. Bob Frech is the newest family physician to join the Bridges Community Health Centre (CHC), located inside the Holiday Inn on Garrison Road. The CHC provides primary health care services, health promotion programs, and offers a multidisciplinary team of health care providers like nurse practitioners, dietitians and social workers.

Free oral care for people in need

For the second consecutive year, registered dental hygienists across the province will open their hearts and clinics to provide oral health care to the public who may be financially unable to receive dental hygiene care or have difficulty accessing treatment, at no cost.

"Gift from the Heart" is a one-day volunteer event to bring awareness to the overwhelming number of Ontarians unable to afford oral health care," says founder and private practice dental hygienist Bev Woods.

A local participating clinic is

Choice Independent Dental Hygiene, located at 168 Garrison Road. For additional information, interested people can call Nancy Pearce at (905) 994-0259.



Come see the latest developments on the signature bridge options, plaza and greenspace.

For further details on the Peace Bridge Project or questions concerning this event, please call 1-888-275-3360. Public comment forms and additional information on the project can be found on our website www.peacebridges.com/2010designexhibit.aspx

BUFFALO OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Jan. 28, 2010 2-8 p.m.
Friday, Jan. 29, 2010 2-8 p.m.
Saturday, Jan. 30, 2010 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
New York State Armory,
184 Connecticut St., Buffalo, New York

FORT ERIE OPEN HOUSE

Thursday, Feb. 4, 2010 2-8 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 5, 2010 2-8 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 6, 2010 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Peace Bridge Authority Board Room,
100 Queen Street, Fort Erie, Ontario

Sleeping bags for Haiti



Elizabeth MacDonald, left, Danya Sceppacerqua and Destiny Poirier at the Victory Christian Centre on Garrison Road. They have been visiting local grocery stores recently, collecting milk bags to be made into sleeping bags and sent to those who need them in Haiti. They are quite pleased with the response they have been given from local retailers and hope the support will continue. Anyone who would like to donate can call MacDonald at (905) 471-4463.

Weddings of 2009

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May all your days together be as happy as this one!

Hand held device legislation taking effect

Kris Dubé
The Times

If you happen to be driving and your cell phone rings... don't answer it.

On Monday, the hand held distraction devices section of the Highway Traffic Act will officially become law.

In October, a three month education period was conducted by police services around Ontario, as a request from the provincial government.

This educational period has been adjourned and starting this week drivers who do not abide by this law can receive a fine of \$155.

Anyone seen operating a motor vehicle with a distraction device such as a cell phone, an iPod, portable radio or device with a screen visible to the driver will be subject to fines.

Dave Hunter, Fort Erie's staff sergeant with the Niagara Regional Police said there won't be any specific initiatives to enforce

the new law, but officers will be keeping a close eye on motorists, making sure they are adhering to the law.

"We won't be going out on a blitz, but we will certainly have a directive that will be given to officers in the district and that will be to start enforcing this law," said Hunter.

He said enforcing this law will be similar to how officers pull over motorists for other traffic violations. It will be easy to see someone talking on their phone while operating their vehicle and when an officer

notices this, they will act accordingly.

"It's like looking into the car to see if drivers and passengers are wearing their seatbelts... it's kind of the same thing," said Hunter.

There are other traffic laws that will be more heavily enforced this month.

Under the Highway Traffic Act, drivers are required to turn into the left lane of a four-lane thoroughfare when an emergency vehicle has pulled someone over on the right shoulder of the road.

GLT getting ready to hit stage with latest production

Garrison Little Theatre (GLT) is getting ready for its latest production "Animal Magnetism."

The story takes place at a veterinary clinic where we meet a Jack Russell terrier in danger of losing his manhood, a Great Dane named Hamlet who is feeling rotten and a host of hilarious characters. The vet, Joy, is portrayed by a talented new GLT member Tina Chivers, and she sure has her hands full! Her wayward divorced parents appear, unannounced, on

her doorstep. Mother Susan arrives from Halifax to deliver important news. Father John arrives from the "left" coast with his own agenda. All the while Joy has to cope with the antics of Paul, her co-op student, who is played by another new talented actor, Chris Corner. Then there is Clive, portrayed by actor extraordinaire, returning GLT member Dan Bennett. He is an animal control officer who runs, of all things, a pet-napping ring. Suspicious circumstances of missing pets are investigat-

ed by an inept, yet thorough police officer Diane, played with gusto by Katey Campbell. Against the odds, all is well that ends well. The play is directed by Lec Moffatt, whom audiences enjoyed on the stage in "Moon Over Buffalo" last November. Lee's talent for physical comedy is evident and presents a wonderful challenge for the actors. He is aided and abetted by assistant director, the multi-talented Darka Makarec and producer Pat Crimmins.

Banish the February blahs and make it a fun, all inclusive evening out. A scrumptious dinner by Maria's Catering will warm your belly and the play will warm your heart, says GLT spokesperson Zdenka Cole. Performances are at the Italo-Canadian Club, 1101 DiPietro St., Fort Erie. Evening shows are \$35 on February 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 2010.

Tickets are available at Pastries Renc on Garrison Road or can be reserved by calling (905) 871-3520.

• At least 1 in 3 people could still get H1N1.

• 1 in 5 people hospitalized with H1N1 have ended up in intensive care and/or on ventilators.

• Half of those in hospital with H1N1 have been under 24 years old.

• More people have been sick this year from the flu compared to the past 5 flu seasons.

• Flu season continues until April.

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Only you can make the decision to get the H1N1 flu shot. Shots are available at health care provider offices, workplace clinics and many other locations. Visit: ontario.ca/flu



Meteors get pummeled



Last Saturday, the Fort Erie Junior B Meteors were manhandled in front of a home crowd 7-1 as the Port Colborne Pirates created more breathing room in front of the seventh placed Meteors in the standings. Fort Erie looks to get back on the winning track tonight against Thorold. Game time is 7:45 p.m. at the Leisureplex.

Niagara Hawks hold open tryouts

Matt Day
The Times

The defending Can-Am Senior B lacrosse champions will be holding tryouts next weekend to better themselves and hopefully reach the ultimate goal: winning the President's Cup.

The tryouts for the Niagara Hawks are on Feb. 6 and Feb. 7 at Lakemount Sportsworld in Grimsby and anyone is invited to come out.

"We're looking to keep about 80 per cent of last year's team. We're not looking for a major overhaul, just those missing pieces," said general manager Dave Colbourne.

He mentioned how he would like to see some more size on the defensive side of play, as when the team was in the round

robin tournament last year for the President's Cup, a lack of size hurt their chances of winning it all.

Colbourne said he has already seen a lot of interest in players wishing to join his team after last year's impressive run.

"We're getting a strong positive response and that's a good sign," said Colbourne.

It's a special season not just because of our success last year, but also because it is our tenth anniversary.

The team announced they will still be using the Leisureplex's floor as their home.

Colbourne said he likes having a larger surface area due to the team's fast-paced style of play.

He said he would like to make about five roster changes, as he thinks that would complete the team.

Those who are interested in trying out for the Hawks can contact Colbourne at hawksgm2009@hotmail.com or by calling him at 289-686-7081.

The regular season home opener is scheduled for sometime in May, allowing for the floor of the Kinsmen Arena to be drained and ready.

Try-outs are open to all over aged intermediate, Junior A, Junior B players and released Senior players.

New senior players will be required to have valid releases from their previous team before getting onto the floor.

The try-out fee is \$40.

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If you have a brick or bouquet send it to
editorial@forterietimes.com or
phone 905-871-3100, ext. 210 and leave a message

Brick

To people who wear Bluetooth devices when they aren't expecting a phone call or operating a motor vehicle. If you are wearing one to make yourself look important, you have been sadly mistaken. You look like someone who tries way too hard to impress people.

Bouquet

To people who take the time to shovel their elderly neighbours' driveways and help them in any way they can. You have no idea how much your kindness is appreciated.

Brick

To the people who saw my wife slip and break her leg this week and did absolutely nothing. She had to call me on her cell phone, screaming in case pain. When I arrived, she was laying on the street in pain, without any help

from anyone.

Brick

To all the people who park on Bertie Street to avoid paying for parking at Douglas Memorial. It's like driving down a gauntlet with half of the street being taken up by cars.

Bouquet

To people who speak at council meetings with the proper demeanor. Acting like a child when you are an adult will not help you with making a point.

Brick

To people who constantly beg for attention by slandering the Town and members of council. It's impossible for every resident to agree with every decision made by the local government, but if you do oppose a proposal, explain your case with some class and don't act like you are a circus pain, without any help

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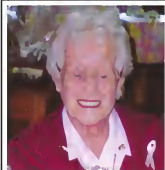
Announcements

Births

FINCHER

Joshua and Laura, along with big brother Thomas are thrilled to announce the arrival of **TRENT JACOB THOMAS**, born December 25th, 2009 at 8:30 p.m., weighing 10 lbs., 21 1/2" long. Proud grandparents are Dale and Peggy Hiron and Tom and Robin Fincher. Special thanks to Dr. Jackielewicz and staff at G.N.G.H. and to daddy for his love and support.

Birthday greetings



OPEN HOUSE
for Ilse von Kalkreuth's
100th Birthday
at Royal Canadian Legion
Branch 71, Fort Erie
Sunday, February 7th, 1 - 4 p.m.
Best wishes only please!



Then Now
Happy 16th
Nick
February 5th
Love Mom, Dad, Allison and Matt.



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Anniversaries



OPEN HOUSE
for Lyle and Jean Hawkins
February 7, 2010 from 2 to 4 p.m.
Fort Erie Conservation Club
Off Road, Stevensville
Everyone welcome. Best wishes only.

Deaths

HOLMES, Edna Myrtle (nee Mehlenbacher) - After a brief illness and with her family at her side passed away on January 21st, 2010 at the Welland Hospital. She was in her 90th year and was the wife of the late Everton Holmes. She will be sadly missed by her children Sharon (Gary) Johnson, Robert (Helma) Holmes, Janet (Colin) Smith, Hanna and David Holmes. Lovingly remembered by her grandchildren Mark, Scott (Diane), Cheryl and Paul (Colinda) Johnson, Christopher and Michael Holmes and D.J., Tara and Jenna Holmes. She was also a devoted Great Grandmother to Laura, Rachel, Chloee and Cora Johnson. Survived by brother Alvin (Ruth) Mehlenbacher and predeceased by sister Velma Holmes
BENNER FUNERAL SERVICES, 1105 Benner Rd., Fort Erie entrusted with arrangements. Cremation has taken place and a Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, January 30th at 11 am at the Trinity Lutheran Church, 171 Bertie St. Fort Erie. If so desired donations may be sent to the charity of your choice.

McMILLAN, Windsorretta E. - At Hospice Niagara on Friday January 22, 2010. Beloved daughter of the late Joseph and Janet McMillan. Windsorretta was an active member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society and St. George's Church. At her request cremation has taken place. A memorial service will be held at St. George's Church on Friday January 29 at 11:00AM. A private interment will be held at a later date. Arrangements entrusted to **NIAGARA FUNERAL ALTERNATIVES**, Ridgeway, ON 905-894-0120.

THOMAS, Nancy - On January 20th, 2010 at St. Catharines General Hospital, surrounded by her children and finally at peace. Born December 9th, 1933, beloved daughter of William and Ruth Thomas, and sister to Greg and Mark Thomas. Survived by her daughter Lauren Groves (Michael), her sons Adam (Ashley) and David Nash, and her grandchildren Lara and Brandon Groves. At her request, no service will be held. Condolences may be sent to 142 Cantwell Drive, Buffalo, NY, 14220.

In memoriam

Kenneth Millar

In loving memory of Dad and PaPa, who passed away January 31, 2009. Those we love don't go away. They walk beside us every day. Unseen, unheard, but always near. Still loved, still missed and very dear. Don, Heather, Don, Ashley and Siena.

LOIS NOBLE

January 28, 2009
In memory of a Special Friend. In this busy world, where relationships come and go, ours was a lasting one. I've met many special people, but someone you stood out from everyone else. You brought the right touch of warmth and laughter into my life. I miss you very much. Loved forever and always in my heart. Linda



Memories

NOBLE, Lois - In loving memory of Lois Noble, who passed away on January 28th, 2009.

Just wanted you to know you're part of all our days if only in our thoughts and memories. Our love continues always. - Your husband and children.

The joys that he missed on life's highway. May he find in God's garden of rest.

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Wraps

Chicken Wrap 8.19
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Chicken Caesar Wrap 8.49
 Grilled chicken with a Caesar salad all wrapped up.

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2000 GMC SONOMA PICKUP
 Auto, air, cruise, 110,000 km. *\$5,500*

2003 SATURN
 4 dr, A/C, A/C, cruise, tilt, 110,000 km. *\$5,200*

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 Economical and stylish, sunroof, 4 dr, A/C, 108,000 km. *\$5,300*

2006 SATURN ION II
 4 dr, 100,000 km. *\$5,800*

2003 SATURN VUE
 Sunroof, map, stereo, leather, 110,000 km. *\$7,500*

2002 PT CRUISER
 4 dr, 100,000 km. *\$5,300*

2004 BUICK RENDEVOUS
 Loaded, 2001, 120,000 km. *\$7,500*

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